

Office of Attorney General Terry Goddard



STATE OF ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT OF LAW
1275 W. WASHINGTON STREET
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007-2926
WWW.AZAG.GOV

ANNE TITUS HILBY
PRESS SECRETARY
PHONE: (602) 542-8019
CELL PHONE: (602) 725-2200
ANNE.HILBY@AZAG.GOV

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Terry Goddard Offers Tips for Avoiding Superbowl Fraud

(Phoenix, Ariz. – Jan. 27, 2009) Attorney General Terry Goddard reminds Cardinals fans planning to attend the Superbowl this Sunday to take common sense precautions to avoid scams when purchasing travel packages, accommodations and game tickets.

"I hope many Arizonans are able to make it to Florida to see the Cardinals play in the Superbowl," Goddard said. "They can take some basic steps to protect themselves against common scams. I would hate to see any fans not make it to the game because a scam artist took advantage of their desire to support the Cards."

Goddard said that his office already has received complaints from Arizonans who have reported fraud attempts when trying to purchase travel or game tickets. He offered the following tips for fans heading to Tampa Bay:

- When booking over the Internet, be cautious about making reservations with unknown people or businesses that require advance payment or deposits without a written contract. Legitimate businesses will provide a written confirmation of your reservation.
- Don't make any transactions that can be completed only by phone. Legitimate reservation companies will offer the option to book by phone or via the Internet. Get their address and ask about a written contract and refund policy. Do an Internet search of the address to see if a map shows the location.
- Be cautious of travel offers that appear "too good to be true." Dramatically reduced fares are often not legitimate and may require additional payments the buyer is unaware of when making the reservation. Read the fine print before purchasing.
- Beware of travel reservation Web sites that are unfamiliar to you. Scam Web sites will offer reduced fares on travel and hotel accommodations, only to steal

your credit card information. Research a site before making a purchase and stick to trusted travel sites when booking online.

Many of the most common scams are designed to obtain personal financial information, such as bank account or Social Security numbers. Goddard recommends the following steps when buying event tickets:

- Purchase tickets directly from the team or the venue where the event is going to be held. If you go through a ticket broker, do your homework. Check with the Better Business Bureau to see if complaints have been filed against the company and look for the BBB online seal.
- When buying through an online auction site, do not let the individual seller lure you away from the original Web site. Any guarantee offered by the ticket broker online may be lost if you purchase tickets outside its Web site.
- Before buying tickets, check the event's Web site to make certain the seats and the section exist. If a phone number is listed on the Web site, call the number to see if it is correct and working.
- Never pay with a cashier's check or wire money to the seller; you'll have no way to get your money back if the tickets never arrive. Pay with a credit card, which is safer than a debit card, or through a neutral third-party escrow service such as PayPal, which offers some amount of protection and potential reimbursement.

If you believe you have been a victim of fraud, please contact the Attorney General's Office in Phoenix at 602.542.5763, in Tucson at 520.628.6504 or outside the metro areas at 1.800.352.8431. To file a complaint in person, the Attorney General's Office has satellite offices throughout Arizona with volunteers available to assist you. Locations and hours are posted on the Attorney General's Web site at www.azag.gov.

For more information, contact Anne Hilby at (602) 542-8019.

###